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WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA?

An Explanatory Note

The Church of South India came into existence in September, 1947, when four dioceses of the Anglican Communion in India—the dioceses of Madras, Dornakhal, Tinnevely and Travancore—entered into union with the members of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist bodies in that area. The last two bodies had already united to form the South India United Church.

The union in 1947 took place after nearly thirty years of negotiations between the uniting bodies.

A joint committee, containing members of each of the bodies, met again and again to construct the basis upon which union might become a possibility. Again and again, their recommendations were submitted to the governing councils of the separate "Churches" to be considered, amended, or accepted by them.

BASIS OF UNION

It was not until 1945 that the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon (*i.e.*, Anglican) consented to its four southern dioceses entering into the union, at the same time asserting that the dioceses which did not enter into the union were still bound by the Constitution of the Church of India as it stood. Broadly speaking, the union is founded on:—

1. The acceptance of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith.
2. The acceptance of the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith.

[A Note in the Constitution of the CSI states that it (the CSI) does not demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in the creeds.]

3. The acceptance of the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord as means of grace through which God works in us. Confirmation by a bishop was not made obligatory.
4. The acceptance of the historic episcopate in a constitutional form—at the same time explicitly stating that the acceptance of the episcopacy did not commit the united Church to the acceptance of any particular interpretation of episcopacy, nor could any such interpretation be demanded from any minister or member of the united Church.
5. Ordination of presbyters to be performed by the laying-on of hands of the bishop and presbyters; all consecration of bishops shall be performed by the laying-on of hands of at least three bishops.

The above fundamentals on which the union was based are set forth in detail in the Constitution of the Church of South India. What is stated above is a fair summary of those fundamentals.

It was further set forth that, at the time of union, all ministers of the uniting Churches (*i.e.*, whether episcopally ordained or not) would be accepted as presbyters of the united Church, provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the united Church.

It was also set forth that it was the intention and expectation of the uniting Churches that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the united Church will be an episcopally ordained minister.

For a period of thirty years succeeding the inauguration of the union, the ministers of any Church whose missions had founded the originally separated parts of the united Church may be received as ministers of the united Church if they are willing to give the same assent to the Governing Principles of the United Church, and the same promise to accept its Constitution as will be required from persons to be ordained or employed for the first time in that Church.

After this period of thirty years, the united Church would determine for itself whether it will continue to make any exceptions to the rule that its ministry is an episcopally ordained ministry, and generally under what conditions it will receive ministers from other Churches into its ministry.

It is hoped that the above statement gives a fair and factual *resumé* of the essential factors of the conditions under which the united Church came into being.

At the time when the union was inaugurated, the consecration of new bishops for the united Church was carried out by the Anglican bishops of the dioceses who were entering the union.

The immediate consequence of the union was that the Church of South

India, including of course the four previously Anglican dioceses, became out of communion with the Anglican Church.

As a result, the previously Anglican bishops were unable to be members of the Lambeth Conference of 1948. That Conference considered at considerable length the relationship to be established between the Anglican Communion and the Church of South India.

The attending bishops were divided in their judgment as to the status of bishops and presbyters of the CSI consecrated or ordained after the union. A majority were prepared to acknowledge such as true bishops and presbyters in the Church of Christ. A substantial minority were unwilling to pass any definite judgment on their precise status.



FOREWORD

Many who have wished to inform themselves about the principles of the Church of South India have found it difficult because the relevant material is dispersed in a number of publications.

The present collection is the result of an effort to bring together, for easy comparison, the controversial passages of the Constitution and other official documents of the Church of South India with related official documents and authoritative statements of the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal Churches. It has been assembled in consultation with the Reverend Dr. E. R. Hardy and it is hoped it may prove useful to students of the Church of South India and our relations to it.

Introductory Note

In the following pages, quotations from the Constitution and Basis of Union of the Church of South India* are followed by quotations from other official sources including the Derby Report and the Reply of the C.S.I. to that report.

The "Six Amendments" to the C.S.I. Constitution which a majority of the Derby Committee was "disposed to regard as being likely to be essential, if in the end there is to be full intercommunion with the Anglican Churches" are for convenience quoted in full in Appendix I on Page 18, as well as in part under their respective categories throughout the text. The Resolutions of the Convocations of Canterbury and York are to be found in Appendix IV on Page 22, the Recommendations of the Delegation (to the C.S.I.) to the Joint Committee on Ecumenical Relations, Washington D.C., 1957, in Appendix V on Page 23.

In the interests of clarity, passages in these quotations alleged to be particularly significant have been underlined.

The quotations are arranged under the following headings:

- I. Faith:
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Abbreviations of Titles

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION-The Constitution of the Church of South India with amendments up to 31st December 1951 together with the Basis of Union as adopted by the Governing Bodies of the Uniting Churches in India and elsewhere. The Christian Literature Society for India (United Society for Christian Literature), Madras, Bangalore, Mysore, Colombo, 1952.

THE DERBY REPORT-The South India Church Scheme being the Report of a Committee of Theologians appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to consider the proposed Basis of Union and Constitution of the future Church of South India. 1946. Published by direction of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Press and Publication Board of the Church Assembly, Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.1. (The Bishop of Derby was Chairman of the Committee of Theologians and this Committee is generally referred to as the "Derby Committee" and the Report as the "Derby Report.")

C.S.I. REPLY-Documents dealing with the relations between the Church of South India and the Anglican Communion, Questions raised by the Lambeth Conference 1948 and the Interim Reply of the Church of South India.../January 1950/ printed at Madras, India by Fenn Thompson & Co.

*Hereafter referred to as the C.S.I.

A PRESENTATION

of the Controversial Statements
in
THE CONSTITUTION and BASIS of UNION
of
THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA
and of Related Statements

I. FAITH

a. Scriptures

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 4: "5. The Faith of the Church.-The C.S.I. accepts the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith; and acknowledges that the Church must always be ready to correct and reform itself in accordance with the teaching of those Scriptures as the Holy Spirit shall reveal it."

Note:- The above underscored words have been alleged by various critics to be incompatible with the "Chicago Quadrilateral." This "Quadrilateral" (See below) differs from that of Lambeth which states as a basis of reunion that the Holy Scriptures be accepted as containing "all things necessary to salvation and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith"* Note also quotation from C.S.I Reply below, p. 4, par. 3.

The Chicago Quadrilateral,** 1886: "As inherent parts of this sacred deposit, and therefore as essential to the restoration of unity among the divided branches of Christendom, we account the following, to wit:

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God.
2. The Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.
3. The two Sacraments - Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord ministered with unfailling use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church.

*Quoted from the Derby Report, p. 5.

**Quoted from The Journal of the Proceedings of Bishops Clergy and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, assembled in General Convention, held in the City of Chicago from October 6th to October 28th, inclusive, in the year of our Lord 1886, p. 80.

I. FAITH (con.)

b. Creeds

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 5: "It [the C.S.I.] also accepts the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith; and it thankfully acknowledges that same faith to be continuously confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the experience of the Church of Christ."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 43: "(1) The statement of the Faith of the Church should be so re-drafted as to place the adherence of the C.S.I. to the historic faith of the Church Catholic beyond question." (1st "Amendment"*)

p. 21 (ch. II, 4): The Derby Committee "would desire to substitute for the words 'that faith'...the words 'the historic Faith which the Church has ever held.'"

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 6: "1. We feel bound to put on record our impression that much of what has been said, or implied, on this topic has been due to misunderstanding and has misrepresented the intentions of the C.S.I. The C.S.I. is part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, confessing the historic faith of the Church and seeking to proclaim that faith throughout South India. We have not departed and, God helping us, we shall not depart from that faith.

"2. We recognise that the wording of the statement on the Faith of the Church may be open to criticism such as has invariably, from one point of view or another, attended confessional statements, but we would point out that it has the authority of the theologians of the Edinburgh Conference (1937) to support it on the points where it is criticised. We do not consider that it would be right or expedient within the first few years of union to seek to alter so fundamental a part of the Constitution upon the basis of which we have united. The process of making such alterations would necessarily be extremely slow, and should not be undertaken piece-meal, and we do not consider it right to begin such a process apart from the development of our conversations with the Lutheran and Baptist Churches. But we consider that the first suggestion made in Chapter II, 4 [see above] of the Derby Report is entirely consonant with the belief and intention of the Church. We affirm that we accept the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds as witnessing to and safeguarding the historic faith of the Church, it being clearly understood that the supreme and decisive standard is to be found in the Scriptures. We are bound to point out, however, that the phrase "the faith which the Church has ever held" contains so many ambiguities that it would require elaborate definition to make it serviceable for the purposes of a Constitution.

"3. We can give an assurance that the change made in this part of the Constitution in 1939...was not made with any intention to depart from, or to make possible any future departure from the historic faith of the Church. It was made in order to make explicit our belief that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation and are the supreme and decisive standard of Faith...."

*Appendix I, p. 18.

I. FAITH (con.)

b. Creeds (con.)

- BASIS of UNION, p. 72: "Notes.--(i) The uniting Churches accept the fundamental truths embodied in the Creeds named above as providing a sufficient basis of union; but do not intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them, or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that those Creeds are a complete expression of the Christian Faith." (p. 5 in earlier edition)
- THE DERBY REPORT, p. 21: The Derby Committee "would desire to have a full stop after the words 'liberty of interpretation,' and they would then wish to have added the sentence 'Such liberty however is not intended to extend to any denial of the substance of the historic faith, which the Church has ever held,'" completing the paragraph with the fresh sentence, "So also it is not intended to assert that the Creeds constitute in themselves a complete expression of the Christian Faith."
- C.S.I. REPLY, p. 7: "4. Note I on page 5 of the Basis of Union was likewise inserted with no intention of departure from the historic faith of the Church. It was inserted with the intention of dealing with the problems of mental reservation and scrupulosity, by making as clear and honest a statement as possible of the fact that the Church must, and will, use a certain pastoral discretion, in the application of written standards of belief to individual candidates for Baptism, Confirmation or Ordination. We hold that the absence of such a clear and honest statement is likely to lead individual souls into grave moral temptation, and the Church into serious dishonesty. As this note formed part of the Basis of Union and is not in the Constitution no alteration of it is now possible. We are, however, prepared to state categorically, as suggested by the Derby Report, that the liberty of interpretation which we desire to safeguard is not intended to extend to any denial of the substance of the historic faith of the Church."
- C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 20: "6. In the preparation of candidates for baptism, the Apostles' Creed (or, if so desired, the Nicene Creed) shall be used as the basis of part of the necessary instruction. It shall not be necessary that, in answering questions with regard to their faith, candidates for baptism should use the actual words of either of these Creeds in affirming their belief."
- THE DERBY REPORT, p. 31: "The Committee desires, however, to draw attention to the very early use of the Creeds in an interrogatory form at Baptism; and it expresses the hope that, as time goes on, the use of liturgical forms in the administration of the sacrament of Baptism may become general, and that the difficulties at present felt may be met by the provision that candidates should assent to an interrogatory form of the Creed."
- C.S.I. REPLY, p. 7: "5. We think it right to draw attention to the fact that our position as a small Church in the midst of a vast non-Christian population, which we are seeking to win for Christ, delivers us from some kinds of temptation to theological inadequacy which are apt to attack Churches more securely placed. We do, however, find it necessary to guard against the mere repetition of Credal statements unaccompanied by living personal faith especially in a country where this has been for centuries the common method of Religious Instruction.

I. FAITH (con.)

b. Creeds (con.)

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 7 (con.): "6. In the course of our conversation with the Lutheran and Baptist Churches, we have prepared a joint statement regarding the relation of Credal and Confessional Statements to the nature of the Church. We are sending this statement herewith as a somewhat fuller expression of our views on this matter."

The more relevant items of the statement referred to above follow:

p. 16: "6. All creeds and confessions are subordinate standards subject to the authority of the Word of God.

pp. 16, 17: "7. The Word of God is primarily and essentially the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. It is in the Holy Scriptures that God speaks this Word to us, for they are the inspired record of the testimony to this revelation of Himself. They are therefore the supreme and decisive standard of faith. But, in seeking to understand them, we must remember that Christ, the central subject and at the same time the Lord and the Master of the Holy Scriptures, is the ultimate touchstone of every biblical book and word. We must also remember that there is no authority either of Scripture or of Creed which can convince the natural man of Christian truth apart from his spiritual conversion, or which can preserve the Christian man or Church infallibly from error. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to enable us to hear and believe the Word of God in the Scriptures.

"8. The Holy Spirit, who speaks in the Scriptures, and who brings home God's Word to our hearts, unites us thereby in one fellowship of the faithful which is the Church. It is in that fellowship that the Scriptures are to be read and understood. While every man is finally responsible for his own discerning of and obedience to the truth, no Christian can disown his fellowship with other Christians or ignore the testimony of the Church as to what the Holy Spirit says in the Scriptures. In particular the ancient Creeds of the Church, setting forth the Christian message as believed and confessed by the Church in many lands and in many centuries, and as we believe and confess it, must carry immense weight, not as being themselves the revelation which is the object of the faith, but as witnessing to it and as guarding against mis-understanding of it.

"9. The Church is bound to require belief in certain Christian essentials from its members and--in more detail--from its ministers and authorized teachers. But in fulfilling this duty in each individual case it must never allow its practice to obscure the truth that intellectual belief is only one element, and that not the most important, in what is needed. It must always seek to be sure that the person in question has faith in Christ. The capacity of the Church to make right decisions, and to apply its standards wisely in each case will depend upon the measure of its faithfulness to its Lord and of its responsiveness to the Holy Spirit in its daily life.

"10. Agreement regarding the basic doctrines which are of the essence of the Gospel is the prerequisite of union between Churches. Nevertheless the basis for the unity of the Church is oneness in the Lord Himself. The responsibility for deciding in any particular case whether the necessary doctrinal agreement exists rests upon the living Church as led by the Holy Spirit."

I. FAITH (con.)

Creeds (con.)

Note:- Although the "forms of worship" published by the C.S.I. are not compulsory, they do show the mind of the Church as to what would be proper. The use of the Creed is indicated as follows:

Ordination: "The declaration required to be made by candidates for ordination, "I... affirm my sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed, and my acceptance of the doctrinal truths included in the Governing Principles of the Church."^{*}

The Lord's Supper: "Then the Nicene Creed shall be said or sung by all, standing; or the Apostles' Creed may be used."^{**}

Holy Baptism: "For both Adults and Children: Do you believe in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Answer: I believe in one God. Let us therefore profess our faith: Then shall the Apostles' Creed be said or sung by all."^{**}

Confirmation: "Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your only Lord and Saviour, and do you confess the Christian faith, as contained in Holy Scripture and as taught in the Apostles' Creed? All the candidates shall answer together: I do."^{***}

* Quoted from the C.S.I. Reply, pp. 22, 25.

** The Lord's Supper or the Holy Eucharist an Order approved by Synod, January 1954, for General Use wherever it is desired, Published for the C.S.I. by the Oxford University Press, pp. 6, 7.

*** An Order for Holy Baptism authorized by the Executive Committee of the Synod of the C.S.I. on 7th October 1954 for optional and experimental use wherever it is desired. Published for the C.S.I. by the Oxford University Press, p. 4.

**** Order of Service for the Reception of Baptized Persons into the full Membership of the Church commonly called Confirmation, authorized for optional use in the C.S.I. in accordance with Rule 5, Chapter X, of the Constitution and with Resolution 44 of the Synod, January 1950. Published for the C.S.I. by the Oxford University Press, p. 7.

II. SACRAMENTS (Baptism and Holy Communion)

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 5: "6. The Sacraments in the Church.—The C.S.I. believes that the Sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are means of grace through which God works in us, and that while the mercy of God to all mankind cannot be limited there is in the teaching of Christ the plain command that men should follow His appointed way of salvation by a definite act of reception into the family of God and by continued acts of fellowship with Him in that family, and that this teaching is made explicit in the two Sacraments which He has given us. In every communion the true Celebrant is Christ alone, who continues in the Church today that which He began in the upper room. In the visible Church, the celebration of the Lord's Supper is an act of the Church, the company of believers redeemed by Christ, who act as the local manifestation of the whole Church of Christ in heaven and on earth. "It has in experience been found best that one minister should lead the worship of the Church, and pronounce the words of consecration in the service of Holy Communion. From very early times it has been the custom of the Church that those only should exercise this function who have received full and solemn commission from the Church to do so; this commission has ordinarily been given by the laying on of hands in ordination.

"The only indispensable conditions for the ministration of the grace of God in the Church are the unchangeable promise of God Himself and the gathering together of God's elect people in the power of the Holy Ghost. God is a God of order; it has been His good pleasure to use the visible Church and its regularly constituted ministries as the normal means of the operation of His Spirit."^{**} But it is not open to any to limit the operation of the grace of God to any particular channel, or to deny the reality of His grace when it is visibly manifest in the lives of Churches and individuals.

"In the C.S.I. the Sacraments will be observed with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 43: "(2) The statement [quoted above] on the Sacraments in the Church (Constitution II, 6) should be freed from misleading ambiguities." (2nd "Amendment"^{**})

p. 22: The Committee suggests that it "would be a great improvement if the passage [indicated ^{**} to ^{**}] were to be omitted as it stands, and if the remainder of the section were to be rewritten as follows:—"In the C.S.I. the Sacraments will be observed with the unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.

"God is a God of order. But it is not open to any to limit the operation of the grace of God to any particular channel, or to deny the reality of His grace when it is visibly manifest in the lives of Churches and individuals. God's grace is always given to those who believe His promises, and Our Lord is always present at the gathering together of His elect people in the power of the Holy Ghost."^{**}

*Appendix I, p. 18.

II. SACRAMENTS (Baptism and Holy Communion) (con.)

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 22: "The Committee would prefer the omission of the sentence 'It has in experience been found best that one minister should lead the worship of the Church, and pronounce the words of consecration in the service of Holy Communion' on the ground that it might be held (despite its authors' intentions) to exclude certain interpretations of the rule restricting the celebration to the ordained ministry which is legitimately held in the Church, though not obligatory therein...."

p. 23: "Some members of the Committee desire, however, to go further and to criticise the sentence in question alike from the point of view of history and of theology. They think that the words can be taken to suggest so gravely inadequate an account of liturgical origins and of the place of the ministry in the earliest Church, as to be seriously misleading. They recognise that the views which they hold as to the origins of the ministry, as to the liturgical practice of the earliest Church, and as to the principles by which they believe that practice to have been determined, are not binding upon other members of the Church; but it is of obvious importance that no statement in the formularies of the Church should be so worded as to appear to exclude such views."

BASIS OF UNION, p. 76: "Note:-After union certain exceptional arrangements will continue until permanent arrangements can be made by the united Church. The Synod of the united Church will have full authority to make what provision is needed for the administration of the Sacraments in all its congregations."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 36: "The Derby Committee understands that this footnote...is intended to cover one or two congregations...in which (in default of any ordained minister) a layman has in the past been allowed to celebrate Holy Communion;... The Committee is satisfied that the exceptions intended to be covered by the footnote...will in fact prove to be both genuinely exceptional and also temporary, though it is of the opinion that it would have been preferable to specify the particular problem in the note, rather than make the general statement which at present appears there."

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 8: "1. We recognise that the statements in the Constitution are inadequate as a full account of Sacramental doctrine, and we have always acknowledged that the Scheme of Union is in no way final. We believe, however, that these statements make it clear that the C.S.I. accepts the Sacraments of the Gospel as a means of Grace, and insists on the words and elements ordained by Christ. What is set out in the Constitution represents the minimum* necessary for the beginning of a common life together.

"2. It is difficult for those outside to appreciate the intensity of the struggle needed to achieve even this measure of agreement among those separated so long, and so widely, in their traditions of worship. It is only by sharing common liturgical life and by learning from one another that we hope to understand more deeply and state more clearly the true doctrine of the Sacraments. Even during the short time since the union we have learned much. There is evidence that a fuller sacramental life, enriched from all our traditions, is appearing in many congregations and the liturgical committees of the Synod and of the Dioceses are engaged in constructive work in fostering this."
[A copy of the Order of Service authorized by the Synod was enclosed with the C.S.I. Reply,]

*Italicized in text quoted.

II. SACRAMENTS (Baptism and Holy Communion) (con.)

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 8, (con.):

"3. Our conversations with the Lutheran and Baptist Churches are compelling us to consider more deeply our doctrines of Baptism and of the Holy Communion. (Published separately)."

"4. In view of the criticisms directed against the sentences beginning: 'It has in experience been found best...', we find it necessary to give an assurance that they were never intended to lay down an authoritative doctrine either of ministerial or of liturgical origins but to state the Basis of Union. They would certainly call for reconsideration in any comprehensive revision of the Constitution, but what has already been said about hasty or piecemeal revision applies here also."

III. CONFIRMATION

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 21: "As the chief shepherd under Christ...he [the bishop] is responsible for doing all that he can to foster the true spiritual unity of the diocese...; especially by ministering, as occasion may serve, the rite of Confirmation or by presiding, when desired, at other services in which admission is given into full membership of the Church."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 44: "(3) The use of the rite of Confirmation should, as soon as may be practicable, be made the general rule of the Church." (3rd "Amendment")

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 9: "1. With regard to confirmation by episcopal laying on of hands we can hardly think that the Lambeth Conference expected that the C.S.I. should make decisions in the near future. This is a matter in which there has been no change in the scheme since 1930 when the Lambeth Conference gave its approval to the method proposed with regard to Confirmation. We were glad to note that the Derby Report stated: 'As an interim policy, and in view of the wide-spread reconsideration of the theological relation of Confirmation to Baptism which is at present in process, it agrees that some such provisions as are contained in the Scheme are for the time being inevitable' (p. 33). We hope therefore, that it was not the intention of the Lambeth Conference to ask that now, or in the near future, the initial policy in this matter which we had been led to believe had Anglican approval, should be abandoned, and that a statutory requirement of episcopal Confirmation should be included in the Constitution. If this was in fact the intention of the Conference, we can only say that it would be an unthinkable breach of faith for us now to propose legislation for the imposition of a rule of episcopal Confirmation upon the whole Church.

"2. We can give the assurance that as a matter of fact the practice of episcopal Confirmation is being increasingly used and valued in the C.S.I.

"3. There are, however, many in the Church who continue to regard the practice of Confirmation, or Admission to Communion, by the local Presbyter as of greater pastoral value, particularly in a large diocese, and as maintaining the historic principle that entrance into membership of the Church Universal is through the local Church.

"4. We are not yet clear enough about the theology of Christian Initiation, nor do we think that sufficient agreement has been reached among Christian scholars, to justify an attempt in the circumstances of this Church, to hasten the application of any one rule. In our discussions with the Lutheran and Baptist Churches, and in unofficial groups, we are carrying forward a considerable amount of discussion of the theology of Christian Initiation and we desire, as suggested in the Derby Report, to take our part with others in this discussion."

*Appendix I, p. 18.

IV. THE MINISTRY

a. The Initial Ministry

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 17: "21. Initial Provisions of Ministry.--The bishops of the dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon which are included in the C.S.I. are accepted as bishops of that Church, provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the Church.

All the other ministers of the uniting Churches in the area of the union who have been ordained as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments are acknowledged as such and have the status of presbyters in the C.S.I., provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the Church...."

b. The Presbyters

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 8: "10. The Presbyterate in the C.S.I.--The C.S.I. believes that presbyters are specially called and commissioned by God to be dispensers of His Word and Sacraments,...."

c. The Historic Episcopate

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 9: "11. The Episcopate in the C.S.I.--The C.S.I. accepts and will maintain the historic episcopate in a constitutional form. But this acceptance does not commit it to any particular interpretation of episcopacy or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry, and it will not require the acceptance of any such particular interpretation or view as a necessary qualification for its ministry.

"Whatever differing interpretations there may be, however, the C.S.I. agrees that, as Episcopacy has been accepted in the Church from early times, it may in this sense fitly be called historic, and that it is needed for the shepherding and extension of the C.S.I. Any additional interpretations, though held by individuals, are not binding on the C.S.I."

Note:- It is alleged that the above statements are incompatible with the Second Office of Instruction and with the Preface to the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (pp. 294, 529)

The Second Office of Instruction: "What orders of Ministers are there in the Church? Answer. Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which orders have been in the Church from the earliest times."

The Preface to the Ordinal: "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,--Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public Prayer, with the Imposition of Hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority. And therefore, to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said Functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal Consecration or Ordination."

IV. THE MINISTRY (con.)

d. Episcopal Authority in the Synod

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 45 (ch. IX, The Synod): "Rule 13. The Synod is...the final authority in all matters pertaining to the Church."⁴

p. 42: "Rule 1. All bishops of the Church...shall be ex-officio members of the Synod.

p. 43: "Rule 2. Every diocese shall be represented in the Synod by not fewer than two presbyters and four laymen...up to a maximum of six presbyters and eight laymen representing any one diocese.

"(a) The Moderator shall appoint to the Synod on the advice of the Executive Committee not more than ten and not less than three persons as additional members of the Synod."

p. 47 (ch. IX): "Rule 22. When any proposition is brought before the Synod which directly concerns (a) the faith and doctrine of the Church; (b) the conditions of membership in the Church, and the rules which govern excommunication from the Church; (c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church; (d) the worship of the Church, and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church; the matter shall be discussed in the Synod in the usual manner,...; but the proposition as approved...shall be referred to the Diocesan Bishops sitting separately.... The Bishops shall transmit the proposition to the Synod if approved by a majority of them; or they may, by a majority of two-thirds...refuse to submit it in any form...."

p. 48 (ch. IX): "Rule 23. If...the Bishops have refused to submit it in any form to the Synod for final voting, or if the proposition fails to receive the support of the necessary majority, the matter shall be dropped. If desired by a Diocesan Council, the matter may be again proposed at the next ordinary session of the Synod; and...shall again be submitted to the Bishops. If the Bishops again refuse to submit it to the Synod in any form for final voting, a vote of the Synod shall nevertheless be taken on the proposition...If in such voting the proposition obtains a three-quarters majority of the members of the Synod present and voting,...the proposition shall be referred to the Diocesan Councils, together with the special report made by the Bishops. If the proposition so referred be accepted in substantially the same terms by not less than two-thirds of the Diocesan Councils, it shall again be considered by the Synod at its next ordinary meeting and, when so considered, Rule 22 [see above] of this Chapter shall not apply, but it may be adopted by a three-quarters majority and if so adopted shall become an act of the Church."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 44: "(4) There should be a modification of the rules for synodical procedure, clarifying and properly safeguarding the position of the Bishops. (4th "Amendment")"

p. 29: "5. The Committee believes that in the circumstances the right solution would be to introduce into the rules a provision for voting by Houses, the assent of each of the three Houses of Bishops, Presbyters and Laity in the Synod, voting separately, being laid down as the prerequisite of any doctrinal decision by which it was intended that the Church as such should be bound."

*Appendix I, p. 18.

IV. THE MINISTRY (con.)

d. Episcopal Authority in the Synod (con.)

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 10: "1. We agree with the Derby Report (p. 29) in thinking that this question is a theoretical one. Re-consideration of the matter may well be taken up in the future, but we think it too soon after the inauguration of the Union to propose a change at present.

"2. In view of the fact that a proposition must have been passed in three separate meetings of the Synod, on the second and third occasions by a three-quarters majority, and must also have been accepted by not less than two-thirds of the Diocesan Councils, we regard the present provision, though cumbersome, as adequately safeguarding the responsibility which properly rests upon the Bishops in matters of Faith and Order. (See also Constitution IV 3, VIII 7, IX 22-23).*

"3. Cherishing as we do the truth that the whole Church is the People of God, called to seek the truth in brotherly concord under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we regard as dangerous any constitutional provision which would appear to limit the final authority in matters of Faith and Order to any one order in the Church.**

*Appendix II, Text of IV 3, VIII 7. For Text of IX 22-23, see above, p. 13.

**For a more recent statement relevant to the Ministry see Appendix III, pp. 20-21

V. THE ULTIMATE RELATION TO CHURCHES NOT EPISCOPALLY ORDERED
and
VI. THE MINISTRY AFTER 1977 OF NON-EPISCOPALLY ORDAINED MINISTERS

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION, p. 17: "All the other ministers of the uniting Churches in the area of the union who have been ordained as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments are acknowledged as such and have the status of presbyters in the C.S.I., provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the Church. Every such presbyter of the C.S.I. is at liberty to minister and to celebrate the Holy Communion in any Church of the C.S.I., subject to the pledge given in section 13 above.

"Similarly, subject to the same provision of assent to the Basis of Union and acceptance of the Constitution, deacons and probationers retain in the C.S.I. the status they had in their own Churches before the union.

"Such bishops, presbyters, deacons and probationers shall, subject only to necessary restrictions in certain directions, retain (so far as the C.S.I. is concerned) all rights and liberties which they previously possessed in the several uniting Churches.

"It is the intention and expectation of the C.S.I. that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in it will be an episcopally ordained minister. For the thirty years succeeding the inauguration of the union, the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the C.S.I. shall be received as ministers of that Church, if they are willing to give the same assent to the Governing Principles of the Church and the same promise to accept the Constitution of the Church as shall be required from persons to be ordained or employed for the first time in the Church.

"After this period of thirty years", the C.S.I. will determine whether there shall continue to be any exceptions to the rule that its ministry is an episcopally ordained ministry, and generally under what conditions it will receive ministers from other Churches into its ministry. In so doing, it will give equal weight to the principle that there shall be a fully unified ministry within the Church, and to the no less fundamental principle that the C.S.I. shall maintain and extend full communion and fellowship with those Churches with which the Churches from which it has been formed have severally had such fellowship. The status of those at that time already received as ministers in the C.S.I. shall not be affected by any action which the Church may then take."

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 44: "(5) There should be a reconsideration of the ultimate relation of the C.S.I. to other Churches not episcopally ordered." (5th "Amendment"**)

"(6) There should be a satisfactory clarification of the circumstances, if any, in which non-episcopally ordained ministers may continue to exercise ministry in the C.S.I. at the conclusion of the interim period." (6th "Amendment"**)

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 35: The Derby Committee states that "It needs to be recognized however that the holding of relations of communion between the C.S.I. and non-episcopal Churches, if continued beyond the thirty years' period, is a factor which would have to be taken seriously into account when the time comes to consider the final establishment of full communion between the C.S.I. and the

*After 1977

**Appendix I, p. 18.

V. ULTIMATE RELATION TO CHURCHES NOT EPISCOPALLY ORDERED (con.)

and

VI. THE MINISTRY AFTER 1977 OF NON-EPISCOPALLY ORDAINED MINISTERS (con.)

THE DERBY REPORT, p. 35, (con.)

Anglican Communion."

C.S.I. REPLY, pp. 10,11: "The principle that 'The C.S.I. desires to be permanently in full communion and fellowship with all the Churches with which its constituent groups have had communion and fellowship' (Constitution II 15) is absolutely basic and is not subject to reconsideration. It is not conceivable that in any reasonably foreseeable circumstances the C.S.I. should break off relationships with those parent Churches with which it now enjoys unrestricted fellowship."

p. 11: "1. The following statements of the Constitution make clear the circumstances in which ministers not episcopally ordained may exercise ministry in the C.S.I. after the expiry of the 30 year period whatever decision is then taken.

"(a) 'The Status of those at that time (sc. at the end of 30 years) already received as ministers of the C.S.I. shall not be affected by any action which the Church may then take.' (II 21).

"(b) 'Any minister (of any Church with which the C.S.I. has relations of fellowship) shall be free as a visitor to minister or celebrate the Holy Communion in any Church of the C.S.I. if he is invited to do so.' (II 14). (This is not one of the provisions subject to decision at the end of the 30 year period.)'

"(c) 'After this period of 30 years, the C.S.I. will determine whether there shall continue to be any exceptions to the rule that its ministry is an episcopally ordained ministry, and generally under what conditions it will receive ministers from other Churches into its ministry.' (II 21).

"2. The provision that these decisions should be taken at the end of a stated period is basic to the scheme upon which we have united, and we cannot possibly now go back upon this and seek to anticipate these decisions. There are, moreover, very sound reasons for this provision. In the first place these decisions ought to be taken by people who have grown up in the united Church and not in the separated Churches. In the second place we hope that they will be taken by a Church much more Indian in character than the C.S.I. now is. In the third place we hope and pray for changes in the relations between the Churches in the west, and between the C.S.I. and other Churches in South India which will profoundly modify the character of the questions to be answered at the end of the 30 year period.

p. 12: "3. We are united in one Church; our parent Churches are divided. If it is now insisted that we state what our permanent relation with them is to be, we can only say that we can be content with nothing except that they should be united as we are. So long as they remain divided our position must remain anomalous from the point of view of any one of the divided Churches. But from the point of view of the historic faith of the Church we must surely judge that the real anomaly, the real scandal, is that the Church should be divided. We have promised at the end of 30 years to give equal weight to two principles; that our own ministry shall be one and that we shall maintain and extend full communion with our parent Churches. As things stand, these two principles are irreconcilable. They can only be reconciled when the parent Churches now

V. ULTIMATE RELATION TO CHURCHES NOT EPISCOPALLY ORDERED
and
VI. THE MINISTRY AFTER 1977 OF NON-EPISCOPALLY ORDAINED MINISTERS (con.)

C.S.I. REPLY, p. 12, 3, (con.)

divided are united. Our act of union is an act of faith in the Holy Spirit that He will bring this about. We cannot therefore say more than the Constitution has said about what our successors will do in circumstances which we pray may be profoundly different from those in which we now are."⁸

*For a more recent statement on the Historic Episcopate, See Appendix III,
pp. 20-21

APPENDIX I

The Six Amendments of the
Derby Report

A clear majority of the Committee is disposed, with varying degrees of emphasis, to regard as being likely to be essential, if in the end there is to be full inter-communion with the Anglican Churches, the amendment of the Constitution in some or all of the following ways:-

- (1) The statement of the Faith of the Church should be so re-drafted as to place the adherence of the C.S.I. to the historic faith of the Church Catholic beyond question.
- (2) The statement on the Sacraments in the Church (Constitution II, 6) should be freed from misleading ambiguities.
- (3) The use of the rite of Confirmation should, as soon as may be practicable, be made the general rule of the Church.
- (4) There should be a modification of the rules for synodical procedure, clarifying and properly safeguarding the position of the Bishops.
- (5) There should be a reconsideration of the ultimate relation of the C.S.I. to other Churches not episcopally ordered.
- (6) There should be a satisfactory clarification of the circumstances, if any, in which non-episcopally ordained ministers may continue to exercise ministry in the C.S.I. at the conclusion of the interim period. (pp. 43, 44)

APPENDIX II

Paragraphs from the C.S.I. Constitution Referred to on Page 14.

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION:- Ch. IV, 3. The office of a bishop is also essentially a teaching office, and he should do all that is in his power for the edification of the ministers and congregations over whom he has oversight by instructing them concerning the truths of the Christian faith.

On each bishop in his own diocese, and on the bishops of the Church as a body, is laid the responsibility of publicly stating, as need may from time to time arise, the doctrine of the Church Universal as understood by the C.S.I., and its application to the problems of the age and the country. But the bishops acting as a body shall only issue such statements after consultation with representatives of the presbyters and laity to be appointed for this purpose under rules laid down by the Synod of the Church; and no such statement shall have any force as a rule of the Church unless and until it be adopted by the Synod as such.

C.S.I. CONSTITUTION:- Ch. VIII, 7. The bishop of the diocese shall have the right of suspending the operation of decisions or resolutions of the Diocesan Council which directly concern:

- (a) the faith and doctrine of the Church,
- (b) the conditions of membership in the Church, and the rules which govern excommunication from the Church,
- (c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church, or
- (d) the worship of the Church, and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church.

A decision or resolution so held in abeyance may be disposed of by agreement in a subsequent meeting of the Diocesan Council, and if not so disposed of shall be referred to the Synod for settlement.

APPENDIX III

The Eleven Point Statement*
on the
Historic Episcopate
and
Future Possibilities Regarding
the Non-episcopally
Ordained Ministry

Prepared by the Bishops of the C.S.I. participating in the Conference
at Bangalore April 18-19th 1956,
in connection with The Conversations with Lutherans

"1. The CSI accepted the historic episcopate as the gift of one of the uniting Churches, offered as its contribution to the life of the United Church. Along with that offer went the acceptance by all the uniting Churches of what each had to offer, as is expressed by the words in the Basis of Union: 'In His spirit of love, all the ministers of the uniting Churches will from the inauguration of the union be recognised as equally ministers of the united Church without distinction or difference.' (P. 69).

"2. The historic episcopate is retained in the CSI because it has proved itself to be of great value for the enrichment of life of the Church.

"3. Neither its original acceptance nor its retention depends upon the acceptance of any doctrine of Apostolic Succession, in the sense that one particular form of the ministry is the sole and essential channel for the transmission of the grace needed for the exercise of the ministry in the Church of God.

"4. The Constitution states: 'In making this provision for episcopal ordination and consecration, the CSI declares that it is its intention and determination in this manner to secure the unification of its ministry, but that this does not involve any judgment upon the validity or regularity of any other form of the ministry, and the fact that other Churches do not follow the rule of episcopal ordination will not in itself preclude it from holding relations of communion and fellowship with them.' (II.12) The seriousness with which the CSI regards this provision is shown by the fact that it has received a number of ministers from non-episcopal Churches into its ministry without any reordination: that this has been done not only for ministers from the parent Churches but for those from other non-episcopal Churches with which it enjoys fellowship; and that it has, though pressed by the Anglican Churches to reconsider its relation to non-episcopal parent Churches, firmly refused to do so.

"5. In any future union it would certainly be the policy of CSI to follow the same line of acceptance of all ministers of the uniting Churches as 'equally and without distinction or difference ministers of the united Church' without any suggestion of reordination and to maintain the same full communion and fellowship with all the parent Churches however organised.

"6. Yet, in any wider union, the CSI would wish that it, no less than the other uniting Churches, should be able to bring into the life of the united Church all the riches of its own life and inheritance. This would include its ministry through which it finds itself linked with the Churches of the past centuries to which it is historically joined in a rich continuity.

*quoted from The Living Church, October 14, 1956

APPENDIX III

The Eleven Point Statement (con.)

"7. 'No Scheme of Union can succeed unless it is plain that what is aimed at is a genuine continuance, within the wider fellowship, of the whole inheritance of the separate ministers mutually enriched, and not the extinction of non-episcopal ministries in order that they may be replaced by an episcopal ministry which itself remains essentially what it was before' (Report of the Theological Commission, Synod Minutes 1954, page 147). This would be no less applicable if the ministry which it desired to extinguish were the episcopal one which we in CSI now enjoy and value.

"8. To abandon this would involve the surrender of one of the aims of its present unity, as expressed in the Constitution: 'The Church of South India desires to be permanently in full communion and fellowship with all the Churches with which its constituent groups have had such communion and fellowship' (II.14)

"9. Wider union would result not in a new Church but in less inadequate manifestation of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is Christ's body and we believe that the form of the ministry should reflect this.

"10. We do not believe that Christ's presence can be guaranteed by any corporate continuity but we do believe that corporate continuity is the proper fruit of Christ's presence.

"11. In answer to the questions above we have felt bound to indicate the reasons which make it seem to us most unlikely that we shall be led to abandon the historic episcopate. Certainly in entering into negotiations for wider union the CSI would not refuse to discuss with the utmost frankness and to listen to all that the other Churches might desire to say about the theology of the ministry as well as about its practical organisation, and this would obviously include the fullest discussion of episcopacy. We dare not lay down beforehand where the Holy Spirit will guide us to go and we must be ready and willing to follow where He leads. But in the light of our experience we earnestly commend to our Lutheran brethren the gift which we have received and which we have come increasingly to value."

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE CONVOCATIONS OF CANTERBURY AND YORK,
JULY 1955, CONCERNING THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

(From the Church Times, July 8, 1955)

1. That this House, while appreciating the difficulties which have hitherto stood in the way of a unanimous decision, is now agreed, both on theological grounds and in the light of the further development of the Church of South India, that it is no longer necessary to postpone a definite judgment concerning the status of the bishops, presbyters and deacons consecrated or ordained in the Church of South India at, or after, the inauguration of that Church, and acknowledges such bishops, presbyters and deacons as true bishops, priests and deacons in the Church of God.

2. That this House further resolves that:-

(a) Members of the Church of South India who are communicants in that Church may, when in England, receive Holy Communion in the Church of England.

(b) Members of the Church of South India who become permanently resident in England, and desire to be habitual communicants in the Church of England, shall be required to conform to the regular discipline of the Church of England.

(c) Bishops, presbyters and deacons of the Church of South India may be invited to preach in churches of the Church of England with the permission of the bishop of the diocese.

(d) Any bishop or episcopally ordained presbyter of the Church of South India may be free to celebrate the Holy Communion in a church of the Church of England at the invitation of the incumbent, with the permission of the bishop of the diocese, subject to his willingness, while in England, to celebrate in Anglican churches only, and, where these apply, to the provisions of the Colonial Clergy Act.

(e) The bishop of a diocese may, at his discretion, authorize the loan of a parish church in his diocese, from time to time, for the celebration of the liturgy of the Church of South India by a bishop or episcopally ordained presbyter of that Church.

(f) A bishop or episcopally ordained presbyter or deacon of the Church of South India who desires to officiate as a bishop, priest or deacon of the Church of England, whether for a limited period or permanently, may be allowed to do so, provided that he has received such permission as may be required under the Colonial Clergy Act. Such bishop, presbyter or deacon become subject in all respects to the rules and regulations of the Church of England.

(g) Other ministers of the Church of South India who desire to enter the ministry of the Church of England shall be subject to its rules and regulations regarding admission to its ministry.

(h) Bishops and priests of the Church of England who visit the territory of the Church of South India may accept the hospitality of that Church for celebrating the Holy Communion within it.

(i) Members of the Church of England who visit the territory of the Church of South India may accept the hospitality of that Church for receiving the Holy Communion within it.

3. That this House respectfully requests his Grace the President to take appropriate action to give effect to the recommendations contained in this Report concerning practical help for the Church of South India, and, in view of the paramount importance of prayer, to take special steps, through whatever agencies he prefers, to ensure persistent and informed prayer for that Church.

The Anglican Congress, meeting in Minneapolis in 1954, urged "that an early evaluation be made by an officially appointed body in each member Church of the Anglican Communion of the situation as it is developing in the Church of South India," to enable it to formulate its own attitude toward that Church. It is in accordance with that recommendation that the General Convention authorized and the presiding Bishop appointed, this delegation. The report to which this is an important addition, represents our findings and evaluation.

The Church of South India is a fact, not a theory. It is a primary medium through which we can express our interest in the Christians in that area and our fellowship with them. Together with the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, it is the best medium through which we can aid and assist our brethren in India to bear witness to the Faith of the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, which is our common heritage.

Our goal should be nothing less than full intercommunion with our brethren of the C.S.I. At the present time, the C.S.I. is in process of formulating its faith and order, developing its prayer book and unifying its ministry. Therefore, we do not now recommend full intercommunion. Nevertheless, we believe that we ought to enter into the fullest possible fellowship with the C.S.I., consistent with our Anglican principles and the Faith and Order of the Universal Church as received and practiced in our Communion.

To this end we recommend to the Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations that it include in its report to the General Convention of 1958, a resolution setting forth the following regulations governing the relations of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and The Church of South India:

1. That the bishops, presbyters and deacons, consecrated or episcopally ordained before, at, or after the inauguration of the Church of South India, be acknowledged as true bishops, priests, and deacons in the Church of God, and that
 - (a) such bishops and episcopally ordained presbyters, when temporarily within dioceses or districts of the P.E.C. may, with the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese, celebrate the Holy Communion in our churches in accordance with the Form for the Administration of the Holy Communion in the Prayer Book of this Church; and that
 - (b) such episcopally ordained deacons, when temporarily within dioceses or districts of the P.E.C. may, with the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese, assist at services of the Holy Communion in our Churches.
2. The bishop of the diocese may at his discretion authorize the use of a church in his diocese from time to time for the celebration of the Liturgy of the C.S.I. by a bishop or episcopally ordained presbyter of that Church.
3. Bishops, presbyters, and deacons of the C.S.I. may be invited to preach in Churches of the Protestant Episcopal Church with the permission of the bishop of the diocese.
4. Bishops, and priests of the Protestant Episcopal Church who visit the territory of the C.S.I. may accept the hospitality of that Church for celebrating the Holy Communion within it.
5. Communicant members of the C.S.I. when temporarily within the dioceses or districts of the Protestant Episcopal Church, may be permitted to receive Holy Communion in our Churches provided, however, that those that desire to become communicant members of the Protestant Episcopal Church shall be required to conform to the regular discipline of this Church.
6. Communicant members of the Protestant Episcopal Church who visit the territory of the C.S.I. may accept the hospitality of that Church for receiving the Holy Communion within it.

